

CHAPTER XVII THE
DISSOLUTION OF THE FELLOWSHIP

"In toto hoc tarn gravi acismate, ipaa Christ! ecclesia continue et indeaiuentur regitur et semper regetur a spjntu sancto."—St. Vincent Ferrer, *De Moderno Eccluiæ Schumate*, III. 4.

"Sono mold che dicono: lo credo in Dio, ma non credo ne a papa, ne a antipapa."—Franco Sacchetti, *Strmone* II.

NOT in the written word alone did the spirit of Catherine of Siena live on after her bodily death. She had left behind her more than her mystical writings : a devoted company of men and women, trained by her in the cell of self-knowledge, pledged to consecrate their lives to righteousness, to labour to the end for the conversion of souls, for the unity and reformation of the Church.

With her last breath, she had deputed Monna Alessa to succeed her as head of the *famiglia*, while all in general were to look to Fra Raimondo for spiritual direction. William Flete and Messer Matteo Cenni were to preside over the continuation of her work in Siena itself. But, although the correspondence between the various members shows how for years they kept closely associated, *nella santa memoria della Mamma* (as Stefano Maconi puts it), the actual fellowship was inevitably broken up, and each one went on the way that Catherine had pointed out to him. Alessa herself did not long survive her beloved friend and spiritual mistress, but died shortly afterwards in Rome.

Fra Raimondo was at Genoa when Catherine died, preparing to go by sea to Pisa on the way to Bologna, where a general chapter was to be held of that portion of the Dominican order that still adhered to Urban, in opposition to the chapter-general under the Clementine obedience that Fra Elias of Toulouse had summoned for Whitsunday at Lausanne. The friar tells us that he was full of apprehension, both because of the storm that was raging at sea and because he feared the Clementines were lying